

TO: Labor and Public Employees Committee

DATE: February 15, 2007

RE: Raised Bill No. 7034, An Act Concerning Collective Bargaining Rights For In-Home State Subsidized Day Care Providers

Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Ancella Robinson. I am a licensed in-home childcare provider in Bridgeport.

I believe that the work I do helps working families, and that is part of the reason I chose to become an at-home daycare provider. I know that the parents in my neighborhood depend on me to keep their kids safe and to get them ready to succeed by helping them develop critical social and academic skills.

I must be healthy in order to give the children the attention and care they deserve. Right now I don't have health insurance so I am forced to get care from a free clinic, making it difficult for me to get the care I need. I am overdue for a number of routine physical exams and I can't remember the last time that I had a dental check up. In addition to the problems I have accessing basic care, I am subjected to embarrassing and degrading questions about my finances every time I go.

Child care providers in Connecticut face financial problems as well. All of the educational materials, toys, and other equipment are bought by the provider with the same money that pays our wages. The more we provide for the children, the less we have ourselves. At the current subsidy rates, I cannot afford to buy new books and toys very often. When enrollment is low, I am stretched even thinner. One month I made only \$980 because I only had two children enrolled in my daycare.

Giving in-home child care providers the right to bargain collectively with the state will improve standards for providers and the families we serve by creating fairer wages, affordable health care, and by improving training. Please support Raised Bill 7034.

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